

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 07MANAGUA1028, IN SEARCH OF OPPOSITION UNITY

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#07MANAGUA1028**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">07MANAGUA1028</a>	<a href="#">2007-04-23 20:11</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Managua</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>  
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<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>  
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1068  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 001028

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

WHA/CEN, DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/23/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#)  
SUBJECT: IN SEARCH OF OPPOSITION UNITY

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

¶1. (C) Summary: A group of democratic-minded Nicaraguans are attempting to create a political opposition force to counter President Ortega's apparent determination to turn Nicaragua into an autocratic regime along the lines of Chavez's Venezuela. The group proposes to establish a new national democratic party that would encompass most opposition parties and form alliances with others. The party would focus on setting a common legislative agenda; prepare for the 2008 municipal elections; and, block Ortega's efforts to postpone these elections and reform the constitution to permit consecutive presidential reelection. The group has met with all parties associated with the Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN), including ALN president Eduardo Montealegre, who appears supportive of the initiative. MRS presidential candidate Edmundo Jarquin has reportedly shown interest in the project, but under the condition that Arnoldo Aleman is not involved. The group will also approach individuals affiliated with the Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC) to join the new party, but not Aleman. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Ambassador, DCM, and PolCouns met on April 18 with a group of democratic-minded Nicaraguans who are attempting to create a solid and coherent political opposition force to counter President Ortega's apparent determination to turn Nicaragua into an authoritarian regime along the lines of Chavez's Venezuela. Representing this new initiative were Jose Adan Guerra, former Defense Minister; Alfredo Cesar, a National Assembly lawmaker/and Assembly president during the Chamorro government and founder of the National Democratic Party (PND); Mauricio Diaz, Ambassador/former Director of Foreign Ministry's Multilateral Affairs Office and a founding member of the Popular Social Christian Party; and, Mauricio Mendieta, plastic surgeon, entrepreneur, and a founder of the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN).

¶3. (C) Group members shared their plans to create a new national democratic party that would encompass most opposition parties and form alliances with others, including the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS). Eduardo Montealegre's ALN with its allies from the Conservative Party (PC), The National Resistance Party (PRN), Social Christian Party (PSC), Alliance for the Republic (APRE), Independent Liberal Party (PLI) would form the base of the party. The MRS would also be invited to join the new party, or to enter into an alliance with it, they explained. While at the start of the meeting, the group proposed to invite the PLC to join, by the end of the evening, they agreed with the Ambassador that this approach is untenable given Aleman's control over that party and his pact with Ortega. Instead, the group will

encourage individuals associated with the PLC to participate.

14. (C) Guerra explained that the new party will focus on setting a common legislative agenda; preparing for the 2008 municipal elections; and blocking Ortega's efforts to postpone these elections and legislate consecutive presidential reelection. He mentioned that the group had met separately with all parties associated with the ALN and would meet on April 19 with ALN president Eduardo Montealegre together with leaders of the ALN allied parties. Then, they would approach MRS former presidential candidate Edmundo Jarquin. The party's basic tenets include internal democracy (conventions and primaries); the defense of basic freedoms including free enterprise; and the protection and promotion of democratic institutions. Guerra calculated that the party could start with an internal voter list of some 300,000 - approximately 10% of registered voters.

15. (C) Next, Mendieta sketched the group's "battle" plan and timeline:

--Form a "Unity for Nicaragua Committee" (CUN) (May-June 2007);

--Release a CUN working document and "manifesto" (June 2007);

--Conduct focus groups and polls, assess results, and find a suitable name for the new party (July-August 2007);

--Conduct primaries to select 1,500 conventioners (each representing 2,000 party members) and municipal authorities (September-October 2007);

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--Hold a national convention, name the party, review and approve its statutes, and establish qualifications for national, departmental, and municipal leaders (November);

--Target candidates for the November 2008 elections (January-February 2008); and,

--Hold primaries for municipal candidates, inviting civil society and private sector leaders to participate as well as local politicians (March 2008).

16. (C) Cesar recognized that Nicaragua's history is replete with these types of initiatives. He noted that Violeta Chamorro's UNO was one that went further than most, but not far enough, attributing its inability to prosper to political inexperience and lack of a strategy. Since then, many Nicaraguans have matured, reject the old caudillo parties, and desire a truly modern, democratic party, he argued. (Note: The group's printed materials propose the creation of a modern party committed to genuine internal democracy, based on fundamentals that transcend personal, sectarian, and electoral interests, and governed by ethical principles and clear and fair rules. All members will enjoy the same opportunities, responsibilities and rights.)

Comment  
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17. (C) On April 20, Mendieta e-mailed a copy of the presentation the group presented to Montealegre on April 19 and informed PolCouns over the phone that Montealegre had been very receptive to the initiative. According to Mendieta, Montealegre was open to inviting the PLC's former presidential and vice-presidential candidates, Jose Rizo and Jose Antonio Alvarado, respectively, to join the effort. Mendieta recounted that in his follow on conversation with Rizo, the former presidential candidate welcomed the new political project. And, in his phone conversation with Jarquin, the MRS leader was "enthused and fascinated" by the idea -- under the condition, however that Aleman would not be invited to participate, said Mendieta. This initiative is

the latest in a growing stream of efforts to create a viable opposition. The project looks good on paper and merits attention. To the degree it gains momentum and buy-in from Nicaragua's diverse and splintered opposition, including civil society, it may have a fighting chance to succeed.

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